

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached replacement sheets of drawings includes changes to FIG. 1 and FIG. 4 and replaces the original sheets including FIG. 1 and FIG. 4.

In FIG. 1, clamp 142 has been added to illustrate the clamp 142 described in the original specification.

In FIG. 4, clamp 142 has been added to illustrate the clamp 142 described in the original specification.

Attachments following last page of this Amendment:

Replacement Sheet (2 pages)
Annotated Sheet Showing Change(s) (2 pages)

REMARKS

Objections

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). FIGS. 1 and 4 have been amended to show an exemplary clamp as described in the original specification (e.g., see description of clamp 142 on page 8, line 15; page 9, line 8; page 10, lines 17 and 19). No new matter has been added.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 1 – 2, 6 – 10, 12 – 14, 18 – 32, 36 – 38 and 40 – 43 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Merker (U.S. 2,293,943). Claims 8 – 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Cowell (U.S. 1,783,410).

Independent claims 1, 8, 24 and 37 have been amended to incorporate language from claim 6 (canceled in this reply), requiring that “[the wall defines] a passageway extending from an outer surface of the wall to an inner surface of the wall.” The office action identifies the barrel fitting 12 in Merker as the recited “wall” and the slots 22 in Merker as the recited “passageway extending from an outer surface of the wall to an inner surface of the wall.” However, the slots 22 are described in Merker as an interruption in screw threads 21 shown in FIG. 2 on an inner surface of the barrel fitting 12 (column 2 line 52 – column 3 line 2, and column 3 lines 20 – 23):

Above the gasket a slight distance, the barrel fitting is provided with screw threads 21. At three angularly spaced points the screw threads are interrupted or cut away so as to provide vertical slots 22 therethrough for a purpose which will presently appear. ... The tap fitting 25 is designed and proportioned so that its ears 28 may be passed down through the slots 22 and to a position below the threads 21.

Thus, the slots 22 of Merker do not extend from an outer surface of the wall (barrel fitting) to an inner surface of the wall. Furthermore, nothing in Merker would motivate one of

skill in the art to modify the teachings of Merker to include a passageway extending from an outer surface of the wall to an inner surface of the wall.

Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 8, 24 and 37 are allowable.

The remaining claims are all properly dependent from one or more of the independent claims, and are thus allowable therewith. Each of the dependent claims adds one or more further limitations, but those limitations are not presently relied upon to establish patentability. For that reason, and not because applicants agree with the examiner, no rebuttal is offered to the examiner's reasons for rejecting the dependent claims.

New Claim

Dependent claim 44 has been added in this reply. Dependent claim 44 is properly dependent from independent claim 8, and is thus allowable therewith. Furthermore, neither Merker nor Cowell discloses or suggests that the "collar has a ledge to inhibit over-compression of the sealing member when the collar is secured to the receptacle, with the ledge contacting the sealing surface, and the sealing member is seated adjacent the sealing surface." For example, the retaining ring 32 in Merker identified in the office action as the "collar" recited in claim 9 does not include any element (including the lugs 41) that inhibit over-compression of the gasket 20 identified as the recited "sealing member."

Support for new claim 44 can be found throughout the original specification and drawings including page 10, line 29 to page 11, line 6.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper.

Applicant : Robert Jewett et al.
Serial No. : 10/767,312
Filed : January 29, 2004
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Attorney's Docket No.: 16795-002001

Enclosed is a \$25.00 check for excess claim fees and a \$225.00 check for the Petition for Extension of Time fee. Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 12-22-05



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